

EDINA PARK BOARD
7:30 P.M.
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
DECEMBER 14, 1999

MEMBERS PRESENT: Andy Herring, Chuck Mooty, Tom White, David Fredlund, Karla Sitek, Andy Finsness, Floyd Grabiell

MEMBERS ABSENT: George Klus, Linda Presthus, Bill Jenkins, John Murrin

STAFF PRESENT: John Keprios, Ed MacHolda, Donna Tilsner, Janet Canton, John Valliere

I. APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 9, 1999 PARK BOARD MINUTES

Tom White MOVED TO APPROVE THE NOVEMBER 9, 1999 PARK BOARD MINUTES. Chuck Mooty SECONDED THE MOTION. MINUTES APPROVED.

II. WELCOME DONNA TILSNER, RECREATION SUPERVISOR

Mr. Keprios introduced Donna Tilsner, the new Recreation Supervisor, who took over for Julia Bertrand 3 weeks ago. He pointed out that Ms. Tilsner comes to Edina with a lot of experience and we are very lucky to have her. He indicated that he has known Ms. Tilsner for many years and has a tremendous amount of respect for her.

Ms. Tilsner commented that she has been in the park recreation field for 24 years, she is an Edina resident and is very, very excited to be able to put her talents and experiences to work in Edina. She explained that some of her responsibilities will be new to what she has done in the past. She previously worked heavily with programming for seniors, youth, adults, special events and some athletics and will now be working a lot more with athletics. Ms. Tilsner noted that she really looks to move forward in doing some new programming and special events in the coming years through the Park and Recreation Department. Ms. Tilsner also pointed out that Mr. Keprios is very well respected in the park and recreation profession and she hopes to continue to help to carry that forward because it's a great place to be.

Mr. Herring asked Ms. Tilsner to explain what the responsibilities are for the Recreation Supervisor. Ms. Tilsner replied that she will be a liaison to a number of the youth athletic associations as well as help out with scheduling, assisting with registration, facility reservations, help review the league rules and regulations and help give any other assistance in those areas. She indicated that the two primary adult sports that she will be working with

are softball and volleyball. Ms. Tilsner also stated that the youth programs she will be working with are tennis, playgrounds, some special events, family jamboree, safety camp and will also be in charge of the warming houses and Van Valkenburg Park concessions.

Mr. Mooty asked Ms. Tilsner where she was most recently working to which she replied she was with the City of Eagan, Park and Recreation Department. The Park Board welcomed Ms. Tilsner

III. PARK & RECREATION - YOUR BEST INVESTMENT VIDEO PRESENTATION

Mr. Keprios explained that he is going to show a promotional video created by the Minnesota Recreation Park Association and pointed out the dialog is on the handout he passed out. He noted that there is some really interesting dialog and statistics from some great writers. He indicated that he thinks the video is well done and it shows the importance of park and recreation facilities and programs and how it plays an important role in our life. In addition it also shows what it means to you as policy makers.

Mr. Keprios indicated that Jim Peterson, a professor from the University of Mankato, was on a sabbatical and spent the better part of a year putting this video together on a volunteer basis. He noted that the video was given to us free from the Minnesota Recreation Park Association. There are a lot of good shots of Minnesota and our park system.

IV. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN/PROPOSED ITEMS FOR PARK REFERENDUM

Mr. Keprios indicated that Ed MacHolda, Donna Tilsner, Susan Miller, Vince Cockriel, himself and a few others helped to put this capital improvement plan together. He noted that it's a living document and not one that remains been cast in stone without change. Mr. Keprios stated that it will constantly need to be adjusted to what the changing needs are. Therefore, this most recent capital plan shows what we as staff perceive to be the needs in the order that they appear by year. Mr. Keprios pointed out that these are items that cannot be funded through the normal operations of our operating budget and therefore we have to rely on a capital plan. He then indicated that at the last Park Board meeting Mr. White asked that staff come back with a list of what might be some appropriate items to include as part of the referendum that's being proposed. Mr. Keprios indicated that they came up with 4.1 million dollars worth of items, a large share of it being fields.

He explained that we are desperately in need of upgrading our fields due to the level of play that they get from the time the snow melts until it flies again. He noted that this plan does not suggest the addition of a lot of facilities with the exception of completing the development of Van Valkenburg Park. The majority of it is primarily safety issues.

Mr. Grabiell asked Mr. Keprios what he means by upgrading the fields. Mr. Keprios replied that he is talking about literally rebuilding them to a state where they can sustain the amount of play that we have. He noted that the conditions that some of the fields are in right now

they are almost as flat as a pancake. They have either sunk, shifted or weren't graded right to begin with. In addition, the sub-soils in a lot of the parks are filled with concrete, curbing from streets and sidewalks, and they are constantly coming up from the frost which is a safety hazard. Also, where there is not proper drainage and grading there are a lot of bare spots that make the fields unsafe. Mr. Keprios stated the thought is to tear out what's there so we can build a decent quality base free of stones, rocks and concrete. Then we will seed and irrigate it and that way after a 50 minute rain it can be played on again after 10 minutes.

Mr. White indicated that he had one question about Lewis Park. He noted that a couple of months ago there was some discussion eliminating bandy and putting in a soccer field and asked if that was included in the plan. Mr. Keprios replied yes, it's noted as the east soccer field.

Mr. White informed the Park Board that Mr. Herring recently talked to the City Council about capital improvements and asked Mr. Herring what happened at that meeting. Mr. Herring replied that the City Council appreciated him sharing the information with them and noted that he made a good point and then asked Mr. Hughes to consider it as he works on the 20/20 vision program. Mr. Herring asked Mr. Keprios if he had heard anything back from Mr. Hughes in which he replied that the 20/20 vision program is still in motion. He stated that the City Council has directed Gordon Hughes, City Manager, to identify opportunities available to fund a capital plan.

Mr. Keprios pointed out that this would be a good topic for the Park Board to discuss with the City Council at their joint meeting on January 4th. Mr. White asked Mr. Keprios if he sees any other potential solution other than a referendum. Mr. Keprios replied that the way he sees it is the State of Minnesota has slapped levy limits on local government so that the people can have more control of what's spent. The theory is that if you want to go beyond status quo, it needs to be brought before the voters for them to vote on an excess levy referendum for a capital plan. Mr. Keprios pointed out that is what he thinks the State of Minnesota is asking us to do. Mr. White indicated so rather than say we need 4.1 million for our capital plan, we ask for a different amount over the next 6 to 8 years and we are going to use that money we collect every year to cover our capital improvements. Mr. Keprios stated that he would recommend an excess levy referendum to fund capital improvements of about \$500,000 a year over general obligation bonds every five to ten years. Mr. White asked if anyone has ever looked at legalities with us receiving \$500,000 every year forever. Mr. Keprios commented that very few if any communities have attempted this, however, it appears to him that this is what the State of Minnesota wants us to do.

Mr. Herring indicated there are only a few choices, have an excess levy limit, every so many years have referendum for capital improvements or look at other sources of income such as the enterprise facilities and the general operating budget. Ms. Sitek asked if she understood correctly that all of the options with the exception of the excess levy limit, we are getting a sum of money which we can spend. However, with an excess levy limit we could actually have a plan to work on through the years. Mr. Keprios indicated that's correct, he doesn't

think we would ever fall short of needing \$500,000 per year to keep up with the increasing demand and expectation in Edina.

Mr. Herring indicated that he has one other thought, but again it's a one shot deal only. He stated that we could look at selling some park property, namely Fox Meadow Park. He noted it is just off of Blake Road and it is totally undeveloped and not used as a park. In his opinion, it's not utilized at all but it would be worth a lot of money. Mr. Mooty asked what are the plans for that particular piece of property, how did it come into the fold and what is the outlook as it relates to us. Mr. Keprios explained that it was purchased as park land as opposed to simply open space. It was part of the bond issue that took place a little over 20 years ago. He noted that money was never allotted to develop that park. Mr. Keprios also pointed out that about three years ago an organized group of neighbors came to the Park Board indicating that they would like to see it developed with playground equipment, a pathway, a half-size basketball court and some pathway lights. Mr. Mooty asked what is the closest park to that area. Mr. Keprios replied Van Valkenburg and Walnut Ridge. Mr. Keprios noted there was some organized opposition to that request, specifically those who live real close to that property who use it as an extension to their background, who did not want to see any development. He indicated that the direction the Park Board gave to them was they appreciated them coming forward, however, their hands are tied because there isn't any funding available. Mr. Mooty asked Mr. Keprios if he has any sense of what the appraisal would be for the piece of property. Mr. Keprios replied that he doesn't, however, he would find out.

Mr. Herring noted that he thought there was going to be a path around Braemar Golf Course. Mr. Keprios indicated that currently is a sore subject. The City Engineering Department has been working with the legal system to get the necessary permits and easements in place to complete the path. It has been moving very slowly. Mr. Herring asked didn't there used to be a walking path there to which it was noted yes there was. Mr. Herring asked Mr. Keprios to find out where that is at and include it in the staff report next month.

V. WOODDALE PARK PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

Mr. Keprios indicated that between the developer's fund and the old capital plan, there is \$309,000 available. Therefore, we do have enough money to do the Wooddale comfort station. The question, however, is both Wooddale and Normandale are due for the new playground equipment, they are both the exact same age and in the same shape but there is only enough money available to do one. Mr. Keprios stated that he doesn't really have a strong opinion one way or another as to which one is done first.

Mr. Herring commented that he thought Mr. Keprios report was very objective and there definitely is a need at both places. He indicated that his family uses Normandale Park yet Wooddale Park is one of the most visible parks in Edina and it does get a lot of use. Therefore, if he had to pick one he would go with staff's recommendation to do Wooddale Park first.

Ms. Sitek asked how far down the line would it be before Normandale Park would get done. Mr. Keprios replied as soon as funding is available and if the referendum becomes a reality it could get done immediately after successful passage of the referendum. Mr. Mooty asked what is the equipment going to cost and will there be any dollars left over. Mr. Keprios indicated that the comfort station is going to cost approximately \$110,000 and the playground equipment will cost anywhere from \$110,000 to \$114,000. Mr. Mooty commented that there should be approximately \$80,000 to \$90,000 left and asked how much would the Normandale Park playground equipment cost. Mr. MacHolda responded that he thinks it would be slightly less than Wooddale because the space available is not as large and therefore would cost anywhere between \$85,000 to \$100,000. Mr. Mooty stated that realistically we are not that far away from being able to do it assuming we can create \$10,000 to \$15,000 out of the operating budget to do some of the work. Mr. Keprios responded that is possible. Mr. Herring indicated that he would be hesitant to tap out every last dollar from the developer's fund because you never know when a breakdown at the pool or a problem at the golf course, etc. may occur. However, on the other hand, if we are aggressive on this and spend our last dollar then when something comes up we deal with it at that time.

Mr. White asked what is the difference between what was budgeted for the Wooddale Comfort station and the actual cost is going to be. Mr. Keprios responded that it's a little lower. Mr. White noted that his understanding was the original budget was a certain amount but there were additional drawings, etc. over the last two to three years and therefore more money was spent than would have been had the original comfort station been built. Mr. Mooty pointed out that in essence there were more fees but the initial facility was a lot larger than the one that will be going in. Mr. Keprios indicated that the bottom line is they are going to get a beautiful building designed by someone who lives in the area and has the endorsement of the neighborhood committee. Mr. White commented that he did a great job.

Mr. Herring asked the Park Board how they felt about using all of the money. Mr. White replied he thinks we should hold off because we can always decide later if we want to use it.

Chuck Mooty MOVED TO APPROVE STAFF'S RECOMMENDATION TO REPLACE THE WOODDALE PARK PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT. Andy Finsness SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

VI. COMMUNITY EDUCATION SERVICES REPORT - LINDA PRESTHUS

Ms. Presthus was not at the Park Board meeting, however, Mr. Keprios indicated that he did speak to Ms. Presthus and noted that there wasn't anything at the most recent meeting that pertained to the Park Board. He stated that Ms. Presthus also suggested taking this report off of the future Park Board agendas because she feels there would not be a whole lot to talk about. Mr. Herring pointed out that he has served on the Community Education Services Board and has also been the chair of that board and feels that a very short report each month of what is currently happening is well worth it.

VII. PARK BOARD MEETING CALENDAR FOR THE YEAR 2000

Mr. Herring indicated that he thinks the calendar for 2000 looks great. Mr. Keprios pointed out one error, the meeting in January is on January 11th and not January 14th. He stated that Mr. Kojetin will be giving a report at the January 11th Park Board meeting and that the meeting will be held at Arneson Acres.

Mr. Keprios asked the Park Board that if one of their goals is to speed the meetings along would they want to eliminate having the facility managers and other staff reports at the Park Board meetings. Mr. Herring replied that he likes having the staff give reports and especially since there are so many new Park Board members it gives them a chance to meet people, see places and ask questions.

Mr. White asked if there could be a reminder cover sheet with each packet indicating the location and time of the Park Board meetings. It was noted that would be done.

Mr. White MOVED TO ADOPT THE 2000 CALENDAR. Floyd Grabel SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

VIII. OTHER

A. Fees and Charges - Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that the fees and charges they recommended to the City Council were approved with one exception. They took the non-patron 18 hole greens fee and the 9 hole non-patron greens fee and raised them an additional \$3.00 beyond what Mr. Valliere had recommended. Mr. Herring asked Mr. Keprios what the context was for that added increase. Mr. Keprios replied that the City Council indicated they would like to raise the golf course fees above and beyond the staff and Park Board recommendation and asked how he would feel about that. Mr. Keprios explained that his initial response was how about if you approve everything else and delay action on the golf course fees. Mr. Keprios noted that the City Council then asked where does Edina fit in the scheme of things to which he replied we are already a little bit higher priced than Brookview. The City Council replied Braemar is a lot better than Brookview and therefore the golfers are getting way too good of a deal and we need to capture some more money out there. Mr. Keprios indicated that he tried to impress upon them that we are still trying to pay off a cash deficit out there, which we are doing a great job on, as well as try to maintain some capital improvements on top of that. Mr. Keprios also informed the City Council that we still have some long term debt to pay principal and interest above that. Mr. Keprios stated that the City Council did not vote on the concept of using golf course revenues to fund other projects, however, they ultimately voted to raise non-patron greens fees higher than the fees proposed by staff and Park Board.

Mr. Mooty asked Mr. Valliere what he thinks that is going to do for Braemar's incremental revenue. Mr. Valliere replied that the people whose fees are being raised \$4.00 to play the nine hole course are going to be very upset. He explained that for a lot of residents who play and do not buy the patron card, this is a pretty hefty increase in green fees for them. Mr.

Valliere stated that they will lose some business and there will be a policing problem for the patron card. Mr. White asked Mr. Valliere what he means by a policing problem. Mr. Valliere explained that right now there is a \$9.00 difference between a patron card holder and a non-patron card holder so that's an even greater incentive to get the patron card. However, people who use the golf course all the time think all of the staff should know them and they shouldn't have to always show their card and when they're asked to show their card they get upset. Therefore, it becomes a policing problem. Ms. Sitek asked if there is another rate for non-residents to which it was indicated no. Ms. Sitek then asked why isn't there a separate rate. Mr. Valliere explained that the city councils of the past felt that Edina should not build walls around the facility because golfers are very mobile people and go from one course to the next. Therefore, if different rates were set, it would cause other facilities to do the same thing. Mr. Mooty commented that would cause a lot of policing problems. Mr. Valliere replied exactly because a lot of people who live in Edina have Minneapolis on their driver's license and then we have to look on a map and then it becomes an issue of customers saying we don't trust them.

Mr. Herring asked if anyone has estimated what the expected revenue increase will be with these changes. Mr. Valliere replied that if the current number of rounds were used, including the patron card increase, it would be approximately \$210,000. He stated again, however, he feels there is going to be some lost business on the nine hole course but it may also motivate some people to buy a patron card.

B. Braemar Men's Club Concern - Mr. Keprios stated that everyone should have received a copy of the letter Paul O'Connor sent. He noted that the letter basically addresses the concern that a number of golfers have heard it is being considered to use revenues from the golf course and aquatic center to help fund a capital plan. He noted that this a great concern to them. Mr. Herring asked if these concerned residents should be invited to speak to the Park Board. Mr. Keprios indicated that the City Council raised the fees and suggested to the Park Board that this topic also be discussed with the City Council at their January 4th meeting with them.

C. Town Meeting - Mr. Keprios noted that February 8th is the town meeting for asset building. At this meeting they will talk about the results from the survey that was done with the high school students. Mr. Herring stated that he would recommend everyone attend the meeting and asked Mr. Keprios to explain what they are trying to achieve at this meeting. Mr. Keprios explained it's a community wide initiative to develop more assets in the lives of youth today. He stated that the more assets kids have the less likely they are to engage in negative behaviors. He noted that the last time they did this study the research showed that our youth are doing great. However, the biggest deficiencies at that time was a lack of caring, supporting adults in their lives. That was the glowing number one item that came out. It was noted that teachers and coaches need to maybe do a little more than just teach but need to nurture kids and support them, almost be a substitute parent at times. Mr. Keprios indicated that the Town Meeting is February 8th at 7:00 p.m. in the high school auditorium. Mr. Herring pointed out that is the same night as the Park Board meeting so it was noted the Park Board meeting will be changed to a different date.

Mr. Herring asked that a reminder notice be mailed out for the both the joint City Council meeting and the town meeting.

D. Santa House - Mr. White indicated that he heard the Edina Federation Women's Society is not going to have Santa House anymore and asked why. Mr. Fredlund noted his wife is on the board and explained that it is a lot of work and everyone is getting older. Mr. Valliere commented that they have already given away all of their props.

Mr. Herring commented that this group has given a lot of donations to Rosland Park in the past.

E. Athletic Association Meeting - Mr. Keprios noted that on Thursday night this week staff is going to meet with the athletic association presidents to discuss common issues as well as make some suggestions. Currently staff is looking at the possibility of having the Park and Recreation Department handle all computerized registrations for all the youth athletic associations, including on-line registration through the internet or by phone.

Mr. Keprios also noted that Mr. MacHolda has been working with Marsha Buchok, who is with the Edina Community Education Services, on a cooperative marketing piece that would be done quarterly as opposed to our annual calendar.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Chuck Mooty MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:35 P.M. Tom White SECONDED THE MOTION. MEETING ADJOURNED.